

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 770
By Herron

A RESOLUTION to honor Dr. Robert L. Summitt on the occasion
of his retirement as Dean of the University of
Tennessee College of Medicine.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this legislative body should recognize those
exemplary citizens who during their years of work have performed with extraordinary dedication
and uncommon acumen; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Robert L. Summitt is one such outstanding citizen who has served with
probity and proficiency for 34 years as a distinguished faculty member and physician with the
University of Tennessee College of Medicine; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Summitt has served with the utmost professionalism and integrity as
Dean of the College of Medicine since 1981; and

WHEREAS, he will answer the tantalizing call of retirement on June 30, 1998; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Summitt will continue to hold a faculty position as Professor of
Pediatrics and Anatomy and he plans to continue to serve the college in an administrative role;
and

WHEREAS, Dr. Summitt is admired and respected as a capable administrator and
compassionate human being who has left his personal stamp on his school and many lives; and

WHEREAS, he has been aptly described as an inspiration, a leader and a mentor; all
three accolades sum up the life of Dr. Summitt, but none as surely as the latter; and

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WHEREAS, in 1963, Dr. Summitt joined the faculty at UT Memphis as an instructor in pediatrics and anatomy; and

WHEREAS, he immediately carved a niche for himself as a clinician, researcher and administrator and blazed a trail which eventually led to the dean's office; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Summitt graduated from UT Memphis's College of Medicine in 1955 and served as an intern at the UT Medical Center at Knoxville in 1956; and

WHEREAS, he was inducted into the U.S. Navy in 1957 and completed training at the Naval School of Aviation Medicine prior to serving as Designated Naval Flight Surgeon; and

WHEREAS, following his active duty service, Dr. Summitt remained with the U.S. Naval Reserve, retiring in 1992 with the rank of Rear Admiral; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Summitt returned to UT Memphis in 1959 as assistant resident in pediatrics and was named chief resident in pediatrics in 1960. He completed his residency training in 1961; and

WHEREAS, prior to joining the College of Medicine faculty, he completed postdoctoral training in pediatric endocrine and metabolic diseases through the U.S. Public Health Service and earned his Master of Science degree in pediatrics through the UT Memphis Graduate School of Medical Sciences. In 1963, he completed a postdoctoral fellowship in medical genetics at the University of Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, in 1968, Summitt was promoted to associate professor and achieved the rank of full professor in 1971; and

WHEREAS, during Dr. Summitt's illustrious tenure as Dean, the College of Medicine has established a national reputation for the training of primary care physicians. The college has been nationally ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as one of the best in the nation for the training of primary care physicians; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the Association of American Medical Colleges consistently ranks the college in the top 20 for both the number and percentage of graduates entering primary care specialties such as internal medicine or family medicine; and

WHEREAS, as a result of his inspired leadership, the UT College of Medicine's external funding of basic science and clinical research has increased substantially; gifts to the college have grown to record levels and the college's endowment has also increase dramatically; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Summit has also astutely managed the growth of the endowed professorship program; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Summitt has positively influenced thousands of students and residents who have marched through the doors of UT Memphis, but none so deeply as his two sons, Dr. Robert Summitt, Jr., associate professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at UT, and Dr. Blair Summitt, who is doing residency training at the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his meritorious service as dean, Dr. Summitt served as chief of genetics for the UT College of Medicine's Department of Pediatrics from 1964 to 1981. He was also director of the National Foundation Medical Service Program for Birth Defects at UT Memphis from 1970 through 1978; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Summitt is well-known throughout the United States for his service to the medical community. Since 1995, he has served as a member of the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education, and served as a member of the United States Council on Graduate Medical Education from 1990 until 1996; and

WHEREAS, from 1985 through 1989, he served as a member of the board of directors of the American Board of Medical Genetics; and

WHEREAS, he served as consultant to the American Medical Association's Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs from 1980 to 1989 and was a member of the AMA's Diagnostic and Therapeutic Technology Assessment Reference Panel from 1982 to 1989; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Summitt also serves with acumen and integrity as chairman of the board of directors of UT Medical Group, Inc., which is the practice group for UT Memphis College of Medicine faculty; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Summitt has received numerous honors throughout his career and was named Pediatrician of the Year in 1996 by the Tennessee chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and Tennessee Pediatric Society. He is a 1997 recipient of the Tennessee Medical Association's Distinguished Service Award; and

WHEREAS, he is also fortunate to share love and companionship with his wife, Joyce, and daughter, Kelley, in addition to his sons; and

WHEREAS, men of Dr. Summitt's stature do not often walk among us, and it is most appropriate that we should pause to thank him for a job well done; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend Dr. Robert L. Summitt upon his exemplary tenure as Dean of the University of Tennessee College of Medicine and salute his stalwart dedication to excellence as a teacher and a physician and his ongoing commitment to quality medical education and health care.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.